



Syddansk Universitet

Validation of the Diagnostic Infant and Preschool Assessment in a Danish high-risk trauma sample of young children

Schandorph Løkkegaard, Sille; Elklit, Ask

Publication date:
2017

Citation for pulished version (APA):

Schandorph Løkkegaard, S., & Elklit, A. (2017). Validation of the Diagnostic Infant and Preschool Assessment in a Danish high-risk trauma sample of young children.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Validation of the Diagnostic Infant and Preschool Assessment in a Danish high-risk trauma sample of young children

Sille Schandorph Løkkegaard¹ & Ask Elklit¹

¹Danish National Centre for Psychotraumatology, Department of Psychology, University of Southern Denmark.

Background

Infants, toddlers and preschoolers are at high risk of being exposed to potentially traumatic events. Traumatic events place young children at great risk of emotional and social difficulties as young children experience rapid, ongoing physiological and emotional development, have limited coping abilities, and strongly depend on their caregiver for protection and support. Therefore, it is of most importance to be able to identify symptomatology following trauma exposure among young children.

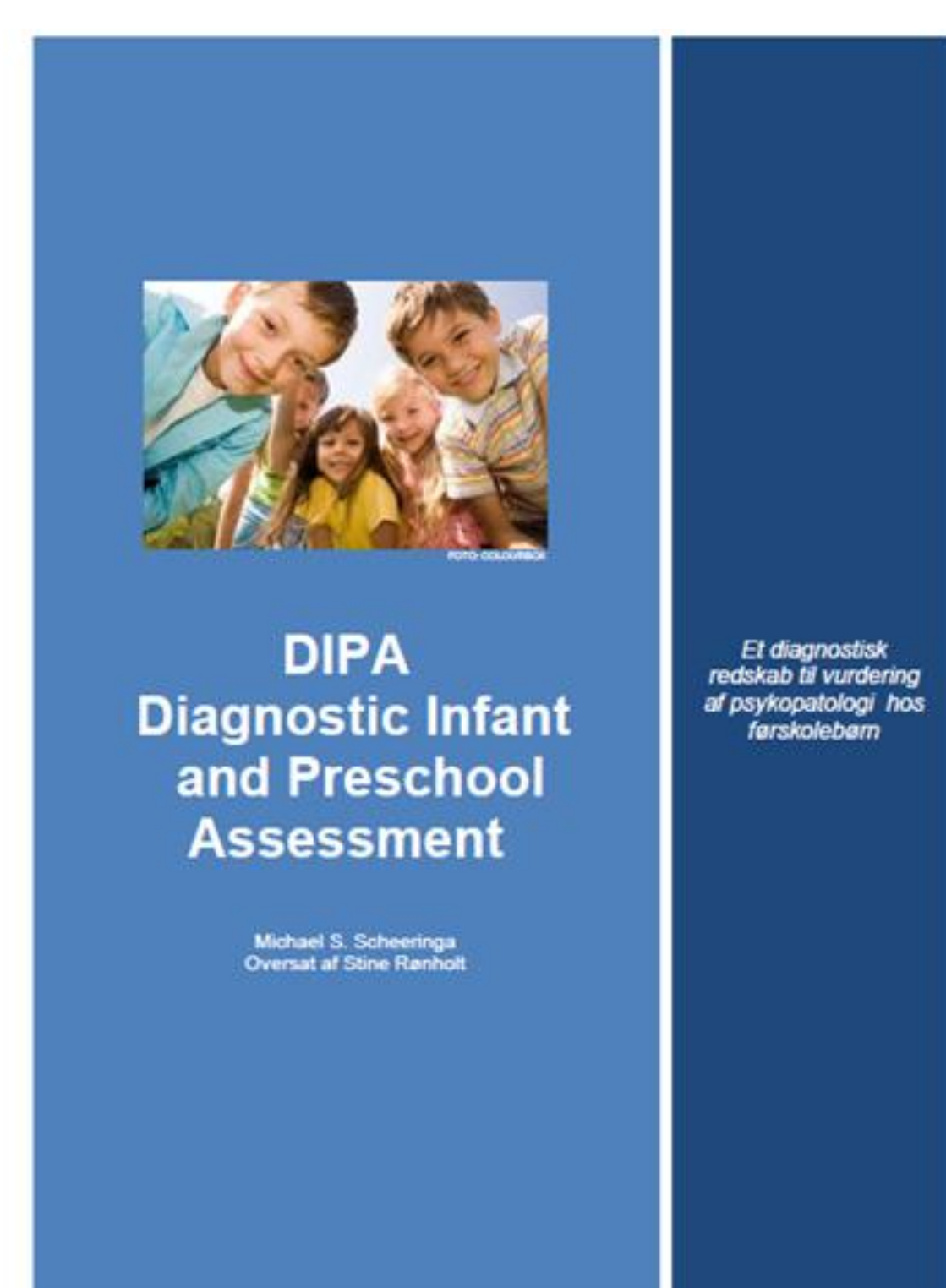
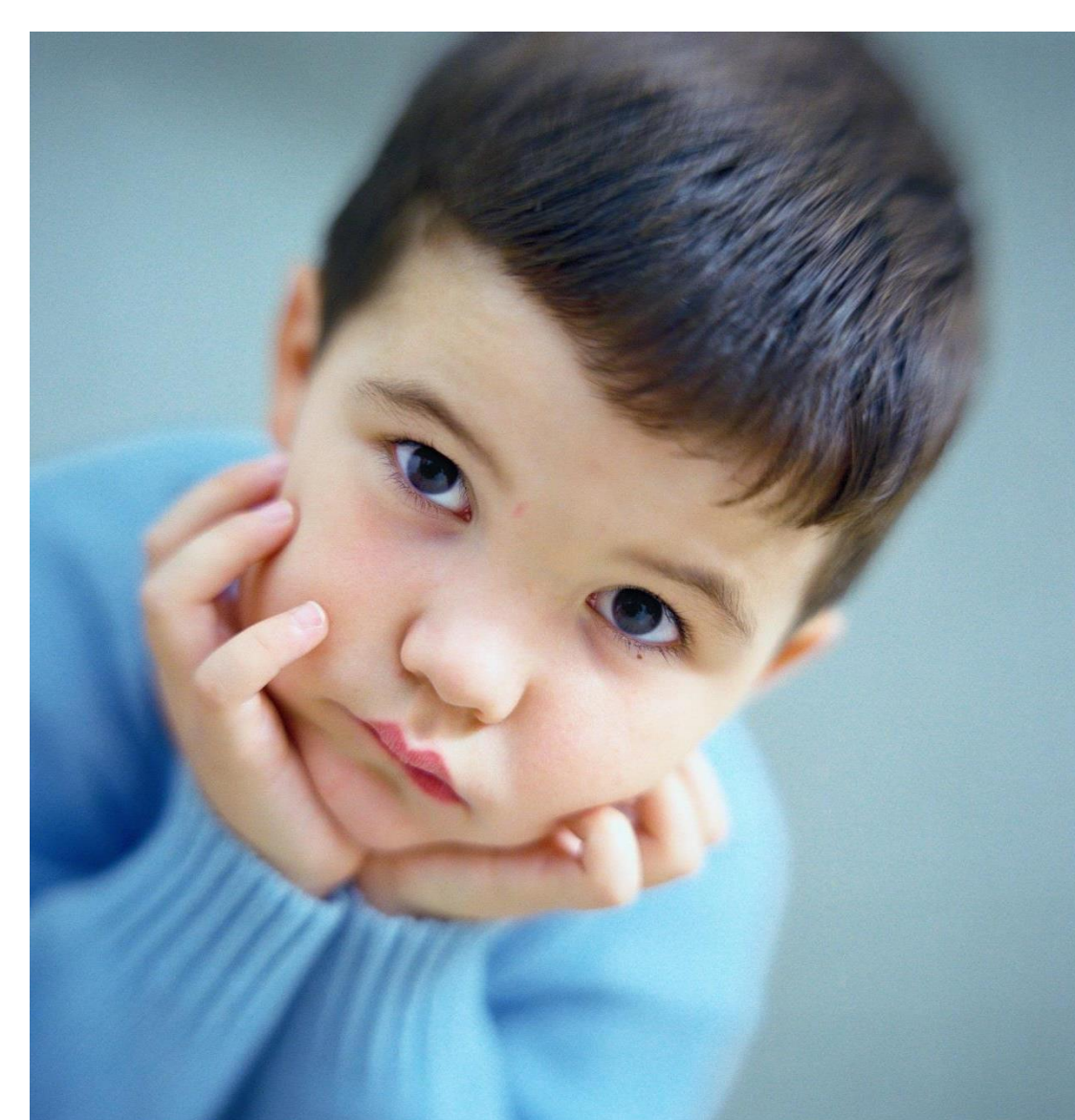
Few developmentally-sensitive assessment instruments for identifying posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other symptomatology among young children exist. One of the few existing instruments is the Diagnostic Infant and Preschool Assessment (DIPA: Scheeringa & Haslett, 2010).

The present study

This study aimed to examine the validity of the Danish version of the DIPA using a clinical high-risk trauma sample of children aged 1-6 years.

Methods

A validation study of the DIPA; a semi-structured caregiver interview. Fifty-one caregivers of children aged 1-6 years were interviewed about their children using the DIPA and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). Children were recruited through a regional centre assisting authorities with psychological assessments of children in cases of suspected violence or sexual abuse against a child; through mental health clinics for children across the country; and through a network for parents victimized by intimate partner stalking.



Results

As shown in Table 1, the analysis of concurrent validity revealed positive significant correlations between the DIPA scales and the relevant SDQ scales. Results reveal good concurrent validity between the DIPA and the SDQ scales.

Table 1:

Spearman's rho correlations between the DIPA scales and the SDQ scales

	SDQ total	SDQ emotional symptoms	SDQ hyperactivity	SDQ conduct problems
PTSD total	.41**	.53**		
Re-experience	.21	.42**		
Avoidance	.15	.26		
Hyperarousal	.41**	.43**		
Major depression	.57**	.59**		
Separation anxiety	.42**	.54**		
ADHD total			.75**	
Hyperactive			.69**	
Inattentive			.68**	
Oppositional defiant disorder				.60**
Conduct disorder				.48**

Note ** $p < .01$

Conclusion

The results provide support for the Danish version of the DIPA as a valid measure of symptoms of young children exposed to traumas. The DIPA can increase confidence in the assessment of young children exposed to traumas and aid in ensuring early detection and appropriate treatment of young traumatized children.

Corresponding author: Sille Schandorph Løkkegaard, sschandorph@health.sdu.dk



Further information:

1. Scheeringa, M. S., & Haslett, N. (2010). The reliability and criterion validity of the Diagnostic Infant and Preschool Assessment: A new diagnostic instrument for young children. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 41(3), 299-312.
2. Løkkegaard, S. S., Egebæk, S. A. B., & Elklit, A. (2017). Are trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder connected to psychiatric comorbidity in Danish pre-schoolers? *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*.

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN DENMARK

